

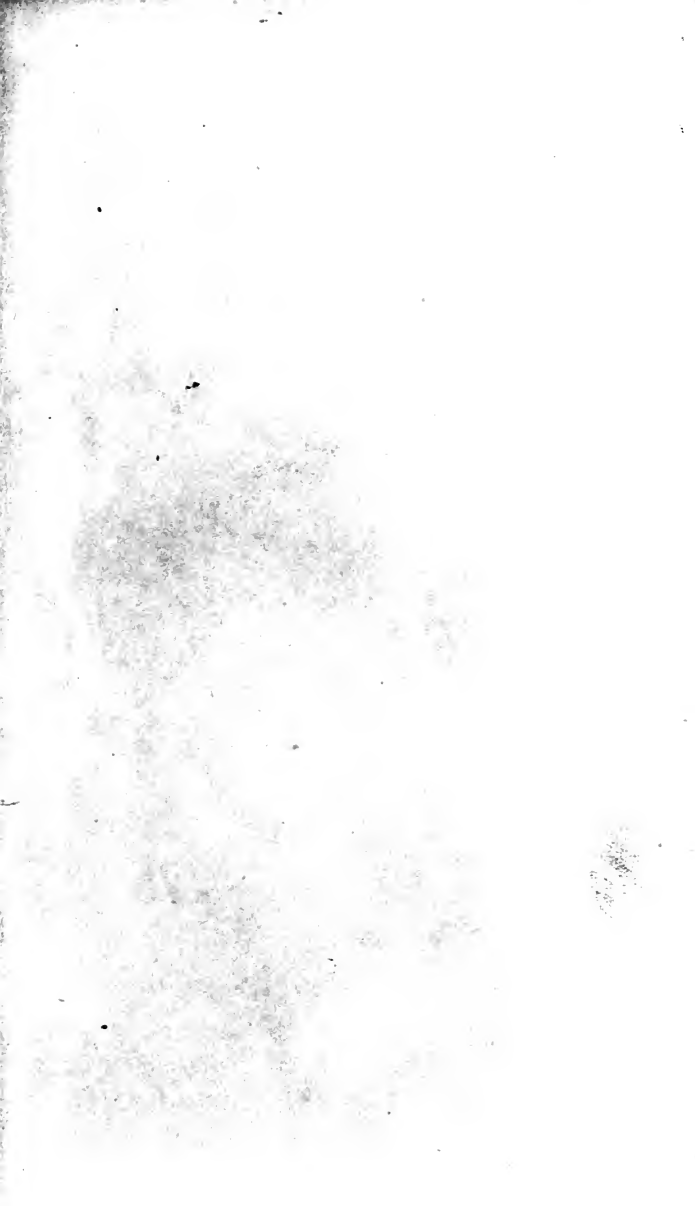
UC-NRLF

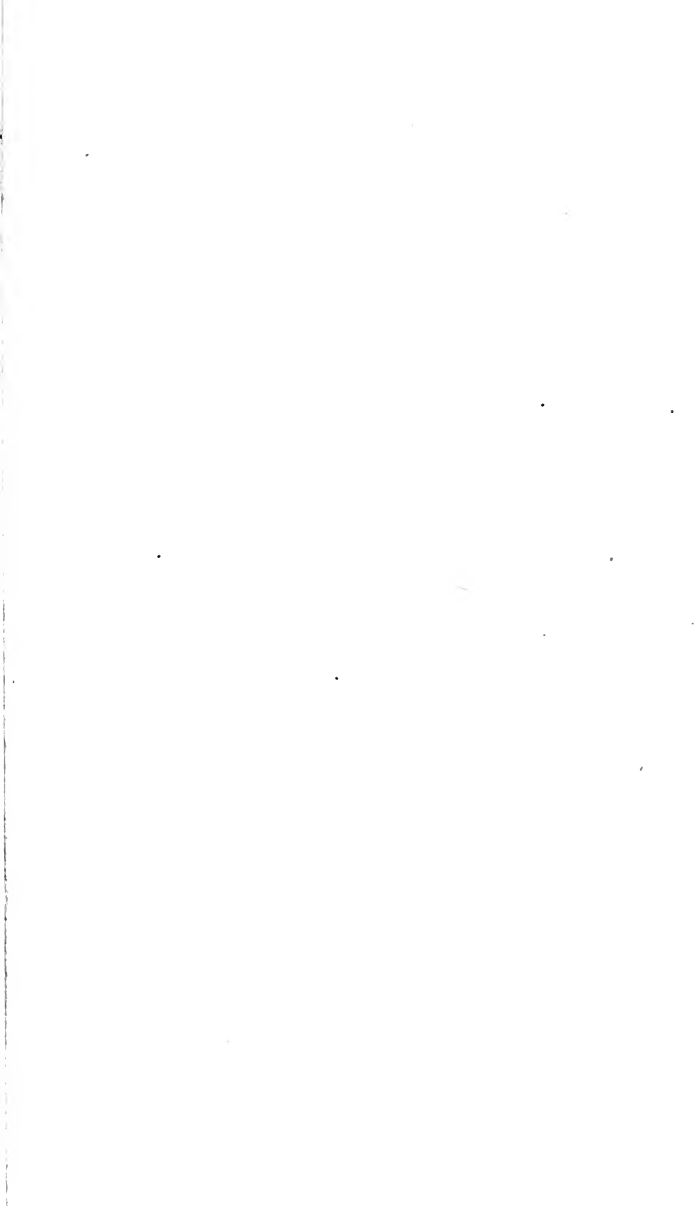


\$B 287 544

The
New Readers
by
J. B. GILL

BERKELEY
LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA





THE RS THIS VOLUME

is one of Horace Marshall & Son's
New Series

The Poetry Readers A.

EDITED BY

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES, M.A.

Formerly one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

This series is meant to provide a means for carrying out the suggestion of the Board of Education that a larger amount of attention should be given to recitation and reading aloud. The contents of the various parts are selected especially with a view to this end. Each part cloth bound, 96 pp., *Price 8d.*

- I. SHAKESPEARE.
- II. SCOTT.
- III. TENNYSON.
- IV. LONGFELLOW.
- V. MILTON.
- VI. WORDSWORTH.

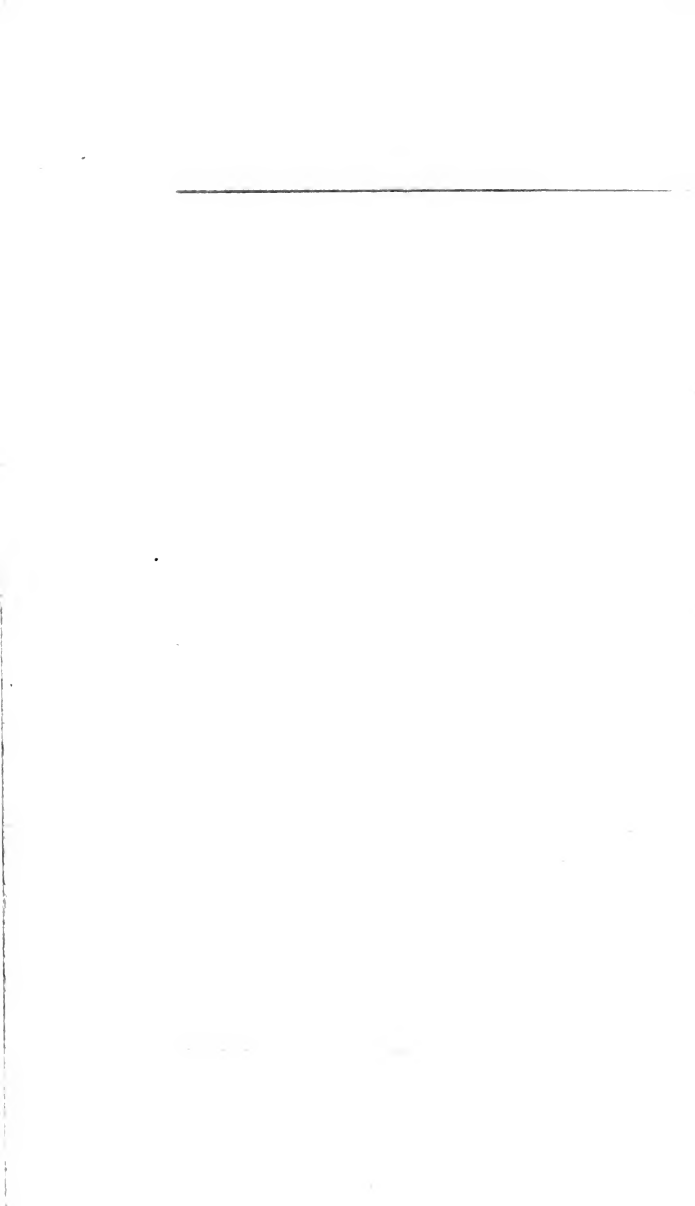
LONDON :

TEMPLE HOUSE, E.C., & 125, FLEET ST., E.C.

*** Complete Illustrated Catalogue Post Free.*

HORACE MARSHALL & SON

TEMPLE HOUSE, AND 125 FLEET STREET, E.C.



THE POETRY READERS

EDITED BY

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES, M.A.

LATE H.M. INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS

IV LONGFELLOW

LONDON

HORACE MARSHALL & SON

TEMPLE HOUSE, AND 125 FLEET STREET, E.C.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

918
G776
pol
v.4

EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE universal teaching of reading to the English people for the last forty years, unaccompanied by any effective organisation for regulating it on literary lines, has led to the issue of a gradually increasing body of books, periodicals, and papers, written to catch the popular taste, in which sensationalism has taken the place of legitimate romance, style is neglected or affected, and false impressions of life amongst all classes of society are conveyed by ignorant, or only half-informed writers.

The study of poetry, which served as a corrective to these ignoble tendencies before they had become pronounced, has not only been set back by the enormous output of prose fiction, for the most part of an unworthy order, but also suffers, even among our more serious readers, from the modern tendency to neglect all literature in favour of science in one or other of its now multitudinous forms.

It is true, as Lord Morley recently remarked, that a certain proportion of our great scientific writers have acquired a good prose style; it is true also that Browning and Tennyson have given direct or indirect response to the popular craving for one or other of these forms of scientific teaching; but the fact remains that, as a rule, the modern reader of science is not also a reader of poetry.

Nor can it be said that the younger school of lyrical or narrative poets has seriously met this need for an interfusion of humane and scientific truths though, it may be granted that there is a tendency in this direction on the part of some of the younger dramatists.

These general considerations would have pointed to the definite need for a series of English Poetry Readers in our schools, had there not been more particular grounds for coming to this conclusion.

The curriculum of the elementary school has become so crowded that in the upper classes there is now given to reading only half the time which was allotted to it a generation back, and although poetry is learnt by heart in these and the other classes, there is a tendency to skip the poetic extracts which form a very inconsiderable portion of the school reading books.

In the secondary schools a similar overcrowding of the curriculum, chiefly for examination purposes, leaves too little time for the study of English classical poetry as compared with that of mathematics, elementary science and modern languages; and what poetry is read is studied too much with a view to an explanation of the allusions which it contains or to its grammatical construction.

A feeling for beauty of thought and expression is not inculcated and the appropriate delivery of blank and rhymed verse is seldom insisted upon.

Yet surely the knowledge of the mother tongue can best be acquired by an affectionate study of the finest form in which it can express itself—its poetry. No doubt there is a dim consciousness of this truth in all classes to whom the poetry of the Bible and

of our hymnology appeals, but it is not recognised as it should be that every nation's expression of its deepest and most intense feeling is to be found in its national poetry. For a nation's return to this fresh and natural fountain of its spiritual life has invariably shattered the crusts of convention and given a new impulse to national genius. Scott and Wordsworth derived their vitality from this return to nature; and national literature has in every country been built up on a foundation of folk poetry, as surely as national music has developed under the inspiration of its folk songs.

The Board of Education, the London County Council, and leading local educational authorities have become more and more convinced of the necessity for cultivating literary taste in our schools, and therefore strongly favour such literary readers as may be found on the book lists of the National Home Reading Union, amongst which are included plays of Shakespeare and the works of Tennyson and other poets. But too many of the school readers still in use are mere compilations of pieces of up-to-date information—biographical, historical or scientific—snippets possessing little or no literary style, intermixed, and in strange contrast, with extracts from classical English prose and verse. It is obvious that the School Reader, if it is to lead up to the intelligent study of the best literature, should itself be good literature of a simpler order. Poetry may be profitably combined with prose in a reading book, but as children are passing into their teens and have been given a taste for good poetry, it is

as well that it should be placed before them in a more continuous, though, of course, in a suitable form. To put a volume of Wordsworth's longer poems into the hands of an ordinary boy or girl of thirteen or fourteen years of age would be, in nine cases out of ten, to destroy every chance of future familiarity between that child and the great Lake poet. In the same way much even of Scott's narrative verse, to say nothing of Tennyson's or Browning's philosophical poems, would prove "a weariness to the flesh" of nine-tenths of our young people if forced upon them at too early an age, and the great body of Milton's "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" and very much of Shakespeare fall under the same category.

We prefer, therefore, the plan of making judicious selections from our English poets, beginning by choice with those who have kept the child's heart in their own bosoms and between whom and our children there is therefore a finer bond of sympathy. Whilst, therefore, we have deemed it advisable to include in these readers some of the great passages from Shakespeare, Milton and other poets, which appeal to the imagination of young and old alike, we have taken care to avoid the inclusion of poems of a depressing, sensuous or cynical character, which might otherwise have recommended themselves by beauty of form or sound or brilliance of expression.

We feel that by the study of such poetical selections as these, children will be brought to take an interest in our poets which will lead them to have full recourse to their works when the time comes for reading them in their entirety.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS	9
THE ARROW AND THE SONG	11
THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS	12
THE DAY IS DONE	16
THE NORMAN BARON	17
SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT	20
EVANGELINE	22
HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD	71
TWILIGHT	76
SANTA FILOMENA	77
THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH	79
PAUL REVERE'S RIDE	81
THE SLAVE'S DREAM	85
A DAY OF SUNSHINE	87
THE BUILDERS	88
THE CHILDREN'S HOUR	90
A PSALM OF LIFE	91
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW	94

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS

SOMEWHAT back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat ;
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw,
And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all,—

“ Forever—never !
Never—forever ! ”

Halfway up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas !
With sorrowful voice to all who pass,—

“ Forever—never !
Never—forever ! ”

By day its voice is low and light ;
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,
It echoes along the vacant hall,
Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say, at each chamber door,—

“ Forever—never !
Never—forever ! ”

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality ;
His great fires up the chimney roared ;
The stranger feasted at his board ;
But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

There groups of merry children played,
There youth and maidens dreaming strayed ;
O precious hours ! O golden prime,
An affluence of love and time !
Even as a miser counts his gold,
Those hours the ancient timepiece told,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night ;
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow ;

And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead ;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
“Ah ! when shall they all meet again ?”
As in the days long since gone by,
The ancient timepiece makes reply,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

Never here, forever there,
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death, and time shall disappear,—
Forever there, but never here !
The horologe of Eternity
Sayeth this incessantly,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where ;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where ;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song ?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke ;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea ;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,
Had sailed the Spanish Main,
" I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

“ Last night the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see ! ”
The skipper he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and colder blew the wind,
A gale from the North-east ;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain,
The vessel in its strength ;
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

“ Come hither ! come hither ! my little daughter,
And do not tremble so ;
For I can weather the roughest gale,
That ever wind did blow.”

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast ;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

“ O father ! I hear the church-bells ring,
O say, what may it be ? ”
“ 'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast ! ”—
And he steered for the open sea.

“ O father ! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be ? ”
“ Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea ! ”

“ O father ! I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be ? ”
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savèd she might be ;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land ;
It was the sound of the trampling surf,
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board ;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho ! ho ! the breakers roared !

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes :
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow !
Christ save us all from a death like this
On the reef of Norman's Woe !

THE DAY IS DONE

THE day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
That my soul cannot resist :

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavour ;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start ;

Who, through long days of labour,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently, steal away.

THE NORMAN BARON

IN his chamber, weak and dying,
Was the Norman baron lying ;
Loud, without, the tempest thundered,
And the castle turret shook.

In this fight was Death the gainer,
Spite of vassal and retainer,
And the lands his sires had plundered,
Written in the Doomsday Book.

By his bed a monk was seated,
Who in humble voice repeated
Many a prayer and pater-noster,
From the missal on his knee ;

And, amid the tempest pealing,
Sounds of bells came faintly stealing,
Bells, that, from the neighbouring kloster,
Rang for the Nativity.

In the hall, the serf and vassal
Held, that night, their Christmas wassail ;
Many a carol, old and saintly,
Sang the minstrels and the waits.

And so loud these Saxon gleemen
Sang to slaves the songs of freemen,
That the storm was heard but faintly,
Knocking at the castle gates.

Till at length the lays they chaunted
Reached the chamber terror-haunted,
Where the monk, with accents holy,
Whispered at the baron's ear.

Tears upon his eyelids glistened,
As he paused awhile and listened,
And the dying baron slowly
Turned his weary head to hear.

“Wassail for the kingly stranger
Born and cradled in a manger!
King, like David, priest, like Aaron,
Christ is born to set us free!”

And the lightning showed the sainted
Figures on the casement painted,
And exclaimed the shuddering baron,
“Miserere, Domine!”

In that hour of deep contrition,
He beheld, with clearer vision,
Through all outward show and fashion,
Justice, the Avenger, rise.

All the pomp of earth had vanished,
Falsehood and deceit were banished,
Reason spake more loud than passion,
And the truth wore no disguise.

Every vassal of his banner,
Every serf born to their manor,
All those wronged and wretched creatures,
By his hand were freed again.

And, as on the sacred missal
He recorded their dismissal,
Death relaxed his iron features,
And the monk replied, "Amen!"

Many centuries have been numbered,
Since in death the baron slumbered
By the convent's sculptured portal,
Mingling with the common dust:

But the good deed, through the ages,
Living in historic pages,
Brighter grows and gleams immortal,
Unconsumed by moth or rust.

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT

SOUTHWARD with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
Glistened in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
Flashing crystal steamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist
Dripped with silver-rain;
But where he passed there were cast
Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed ;
Three days or more seaward he bore,
Then, alas ! the land-wind failed.

Alas ! the land-wind failed,
And ice-cold grew the night ;
And never more, on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck,
The Book was in his hand ;
“ Do not fear ! Heaven is as near,”
He said, “ by water as by land ! ”

In the first watch of the night,
Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously,
The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star
Were hanging in the shrouds ;
Every mast, as it passed,
Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
At midnight black and cold !
As of a rock was the shock ;
Heavily the ground-swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark,
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain, to the Spanish Main ;
Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, for ever southward,
They drift through dark and day ;
And like a dream, in the Gulf Stream
Sinking, vanish all away.

EVANGELINE

A TALE OF ACADIE

PART THE FIRST

I

IN the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of
Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little Village of Grand-
Prè
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched
to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks
without number.
Dykes, that the hands of the farmers had raised
with labour incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides ; but at stated seasons
the flood-gates

Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will
o'er the meadows.

West and south there were fields of flax, and
orchards and corn-fields

Spreading afar and unfenc'd o'er the plain ; and
away to the northward

Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on
the mountains

Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the
mighty Atlantic

Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their
station descended.

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the
Acadian village.

Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak
and of chestnut,

Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign
of the Henries.

Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows,
and gables projecting

Over the basement below protected and shaded the
door-way.

There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when
brightly the sunset

Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on
the chimneys,

Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in
kirtles

Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning
the golden

Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles
within doors

Mingled their sound with the whirr of the wheels
and the songs of the maidens.

Solemnly down the street came the parish priest,
and the children

Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended
to bless them.

Reverend walked he among them ; and up rose
matrons and maidens,

Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate
welcome.

Then came the labourers home from the field, and
serenely the sun sank

Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon
from the belfry

Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of
the village

Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense
ascending,

Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace
and contentment.

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian
farmers,—

Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were
they free from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the
vice of republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors nor bars to
their windows ;

But their dwellings were open as day and the
hearts of the owners ;

There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in
abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the
the Basin of Minas,
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of
Grand-Prè,
Dwelt on his goodly acres ; and with him, directing
his household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of
the village,
Stalworth and stately in form was the man of
seventy winters ;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered
with snowflakes ;
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as
brown as the oak-leaves.
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen
summers.
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the
thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the
brown shade of her tresses !
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that
feed in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers
at noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah ! fair in sooth was
the maiden !
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the
bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest
with his hyssop
Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings
upon them,

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet
of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue,
and the ear-rings,
Brought in the olden time from France, and since,
as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long
generations.
But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when,
after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benedic-
tion upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing
of exquisite music.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the
farmer of Grand-Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed
his household.
Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and
opened his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her, as the saint of his deepest
devotion ;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the
hem of her garment !
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness
befriended,
And as he knocked and waited to hear the sound
of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the
knocker of iron :

Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the
village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as
he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the
music.
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was
welcome ;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the black-
smith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and
honoured of all men ;
For since the birth of time, throughout all ages
and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by
the people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from
earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister ; and
Father Felician,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had
taught them their letters
Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the
church and the plain-song.
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson
completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the
blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes
to behold him
Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a
plaything,

Nailing the shoe in its place ; while near him the
tire of a cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of
cinders.

Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gather-
ing darkness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through
every cranny and crevice,

Warm by the forge within they watched the
labouring bellows,

And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired
in the ashes,

Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going
into the chapel.

Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of
the eagle,

Down the hillside bounding, they gilded away o'er
the meadow.

Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests
on the rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone,
which the swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the
sight of its fledglings :

Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of
the swallow !

Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer
were children.

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face
of the morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened
thought into action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes
of a woman.

"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called ; for
that was the sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their
orchards with apples ;

She, too, would bring to her husband's house
delight and abundance,

Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of
children.

II

Now had the season returned, when the nights
grow colder and longer,

And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion
enters.

Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air from
the ice-bound,

Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical
islands.

Harvests were gathered in ; and wild with the
winds of September

Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old
with the angel.

All the signs foretold a winter long and in-
clement.

Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded
their honey

Till the hives overflowed ; and the Indian hunters
asserted

Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of
the foxes.

Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed
that beautiful season,
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer
of All-Saints !
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical
light ; and the landscape
Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless
heart of the ocean
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in
harmony blended.
Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in
the farmyards,
Whirr of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing
of pigeons,
All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love,
and the great sun
Looked with the eye of love through the golden
vapours around him ;
While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and
yellow,
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering
tree of the forest
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned
with mantles and jewels.

Indoors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace,
idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the
flames and the smoke wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city.
Behind him,

Nodding and mocking along the wall, with gestures
fantastic,

Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away
into darkness.

Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his
arm-chair

Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter
plates on the dresser

Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies
the sunshine.

Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of
Christmas,

Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers
before him

Sang in their Norman orchards and bright
Burgundian vineyards.

Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline
seated,

Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner
behind her.

Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its
diligent shuttle,

While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like
the drone of a bagpipe,

Followed the old man's song, and united the
fragments together.

As in a church, when the chant of the choir at
intervals ceases,

Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the
priest at the altar,

So, in each pause of the song, with measured
motion the cloth clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard,
and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung
back on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil
the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who
was with him.
“Welcome!” the farmer exclaimed, as their foot-
steps paused on the threshold,
“Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy
place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty
without thee ;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the
box of tobacco ;
Never so much thyself art thou as when through
the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and
jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon through the
mist of the marshes.”
Then, with a smile of content, thus answered
Basil the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the
fireside :—
“Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest
and thy ballad !
Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when others
are filled with
Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before
them.

Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked
up a horse-shoe."

Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline
brought him,

And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he
slowly continued :—

"Four days now are passed since the English ships
at their anchors

Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon
pointed against us.

What their design may be is unknown ; but all
are commanded

On the morrow to meet in the church, where his
Majesty's mandate

Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas !
in the meantime

Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the
people."

Then made answer the farmer :—"Perhaps some
friendlier purpose

Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the
harvests in England

By the untimely rains or untimelier heat have
been blighted,

And from our bursting barns they would feed their
cattle and children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said,
warmly, the blacksmith,

Shaking his head, as in doubt ; then, heaving a
sigh, he continued :—

"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor
Port Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk
on its outskirts,

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of
to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike
weapons of all kinds ;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the
scythe of the mower."

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial
farmer :—

"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks
and our corn-fields,

Safer within these peaceful dykes, besieged by the
ocean,

Than were our fathers in forts, besieged by the
enemy's cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no
shadow of sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth ; for this is the
night of the contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The merry
lads of the village

Strongly have built them and well ; and, breaking
the glebe round about them,

Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food
for a twelvemonth.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers
and inkhorn.

Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy
of our children ? "

As apart by the window she stood, with her hand
in her lover's,

Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her
father had spoken,
And as they died on his lips the worthy notary
entered.

III

Bent like a labouring oar, that toils in the surf
of the ocean,
Bent, but not broken by age, was the form of the
notary public ;
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the
maize, hung
Over his shoulders ; his forehead was high ; and
glasses with horn-bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom,
supernal.

.

Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil
the blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly
extending his right hand,
"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard
the talk in the village,
And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these
ships and their errand."
Then with modest demeanour made answer the
notary public,—
"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am
never the wiser ;
And what their errand may be I know not better
than others.

Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil
intention

Brings them here, for we are at peace ; and why
then molest us ? ”

“ God’s name ! ” shouted the hasty and somewhat
irascible blacksmith ;

“ Must we in all things look for the how, and the
why, and the wherefore ?

Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of
the strongest ! ”

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the
notary public,—

“ Man is unjust, but God is just ; and finally
justice

Triumphs ; and well I remember a story, that
often consoled me,

When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at
Port Royal.”

This was the old man’s favourite tale, and he loved
to repeat it

When his neighbours complained that any injustice
was done them.

“ Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer
remember,

Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of
Justice

Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in
its left hand,

And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice
presided

Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and
homes of the people.

Even the birds had built their nests in the scales
of the balance
Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the
sunshine above them.
But in the course of time the laws of the land
were corrupted ;
Might took the place of right, and the weak were
oppressed, and the mighty
Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a
nobleman's palace
That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a
suspicion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the
household.
She, after form of trial condemned to die on the
scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue
of Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit
ascended,
Lo ! o'er the city a tempest rose ; and the bolts of
the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath
from its left hand
Down on the pavement below the clattering scales
of the balance,
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a
magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls
was inwoven."
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was
ended, the blacksmith

Stood like a man who fain would speak, but
findeth no language ;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his
face, as the vapours
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in
the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the
table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with
home-brewed
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in
the village of Grand-Pré ;
While from his pocket the notary drew his papers
and inkhorn,
Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of
the parties,
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep
and in cattle.
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well
were completed,
And the great seal of the law was set like a sun
on the margin.
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on
the table
Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver ;
And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and
the bridegroom,
Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their
welfare.
Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed
and departed,

While in silence the others sat and mused by the
fireside,

Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of
its corner.

Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention
the old men

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre,
Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach
was made in the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a
window's embrasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding
the moon rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the
meadows.

Silently, one by one, in the infinite meadows of
heaven,

Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of
the angels.

Thus passed the evening away. Anon the bell
from the belfry

Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and
straightway

Rose the guests and departed : and silence reigned
in the household.

Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the
door-step

Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it
with gladness.

Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed
on the hearthstone,

And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the
farmer.

Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline
followed.

Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the
darkness,

Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of
the maiden.

Silent she passed through the hall, and entered
the door of her chamber.

Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of
white, and its clothes-press

Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were
carefully folded

Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline
woven.

This was the precious dower she would bring to
her husband in marriage,

Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her
skill as a housewife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow
and radiant moonlight

Streamed through the windows, and lighted the
room, till the heart of the maiden

Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous
tides of the ocean.

Ah ! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she
stood with

Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of
her chamber !

Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of
the orchard,

Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her
lamp and her shadow.

Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feel-
ing of sadness

Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds
in the moonlight

Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for
a moment.

And as she gazed from the window she saw serenely
the moon pass

Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow
her footsteps,

As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered
with Hagar !

.

IV

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the
orchard,

Bending with golden fruit, was spread the feast of
betrothal.

There in the shade of the porch were the priest
and the notary seated ;

There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the
blacksmith.

Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press
and the bee-hives,

Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of
hearts and of waistcoats.

Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played
on his snow-white

Hair, as it waved in the wind, and the jolly face of
the fiddler

Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown
from the embers.

Gaily the old man sang to the vibrant sound of
his fiddle,

Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and *Le Carillon
de Dunkerque*,

And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the
music.

Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying
dances

Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the
meadows ;

Old folk and young together, and children mingled
among them.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's
daughter !

Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the
blacksmith !

So passed the morning away. And lo ! with a
summons sonorous

Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the
meadows a drum beat,

Thronged ere long was the church with men.
Without, in the churchyard,

Waited the women. They stood by the graves,
and hung on the headstones

Garlands of autumn leaves and evergreens fresh
from the forest.

Then came the guard from the ships, and marching
proudly among them

Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant
clangour

Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling
and casement,—

Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous
portal

Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will
of the soldiers.

Then up rose their commander, and spake from
the steps of the altar,

Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal
commission,

“You are convened this day,” he said, “by his
Majesty’s orders.

Clement and kind has he been ; but how you have
answered his kindness,

Let your own hearts reply ! To my natural make
and my temper

Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must
be grievous.

Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of
our monarch ;

Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and
cattle of all kinds

Forfeited be to the crown ; and that you yourselves
from this province

Be transported to other lands. God grant you
may dwell there

Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable
people !

Prisoners now I declare you ; for such is his
Majesty's pleasure ! ”

As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of
summer,

Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of
the hailstones

Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and
shatters his windows,

Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with
thatch from the house roofs,

Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their
inclosures ;

So on the hearts of the people descended the words
of the speaker,

Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder,
and then rose

Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and
anger,

And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to
the doorway.

Vain was the hope of escape ; and cries and fierce
imprecations

Rang through the house of prayer ; and high o'er
the heads of the others

Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil
the blacksmith,

As, on a stormy sea, the spar is tossed by the
billows.

Flushed was his face and distorted with passion ;
and wildly he shouted,—

“Down with the tyrants of England ! we never
have sworn them allegiance !

Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our
homes and our harvests ! ”

More he fain would have said, but the merciless
hand of a soldier

Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down
to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry
contention,

Lo ! the door of the chancel opened, and Father
Felician

Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps
of the altar.

Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed
into silence

All that clamorous throng ; and thus he spake to
his people ;

Deep were his tones and solemn ; in accents
measured and mournful

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly
the clock strikes.

“ What is this that ye do, my children ? what mad-
ness has seized you ?

Forty years of my life have I laboured among you,
and taught you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one
another !

Is this the fruits of my toils, of my vigils and
prayers and privations ?

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and
forgiveness ?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would
you profane it
Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing
with hatred ?
Lo ! where the crucified Christ from His cross is
gazing upon you !
See ! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and
holy compassion !
Hark ! how those lips shall repeat the prayer, ' O
Father, forgive them ! '
Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the
wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, ' O Father, forgive
them ! ' ”
Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the
hearts of his people
Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded that
passionate outbreak ;
And they repeated his prayer, and said, “ O Father
forgive them ! ”

Then came the evening service. The tapers
gleamed from the altar,
Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and
the people responded,
Not with their lips alone, but their hearts ; and the
Ave Maria
Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls,
with devotion translated,
Rose on the ardour of prayer, like Elijah ascending
to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings
of ill, and on all sides
Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women
and children.
Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with
her right hand
Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun,
that, descending,
Lighted the village street with mysterious splendour,
and roofed each
Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and em-
blazoned its windows.
Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth
on the table ;
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey
fragrant with wild flowers ;
There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese
fresh brought from the dairy,
And at the head of the board the great armchair
of the farmer.
Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as
the sunset
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad
ambrosial meadows.
Ah ! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had
fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial
ascended,—
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness,
and patience !
Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered into the
village,

Cheering with looks and words the disconsolate
 hearts of the women,
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps
 they departed,
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet
 of their children.
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden,
 glimmering vapours
Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet
 descending from Sinai.
Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus
 sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church
 Evangeline lingered.
All was silent within ; and in vain at the door and
 the windows
Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome
 by emotion
“Gabriel !” cried she aloud with tremulous voice ;
 but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier
 grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless
 house of her father.
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board
 stood the supper untasted.
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with
 phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor
 of her chamber.

In the dead of the night she heard the whispering
rain fall
Loud on the withered leaves of the Sycamore-tree
by the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed ; and the voice of the
echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed
the world he created !
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of
the justice of heaven ;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully
slumbered till morning.

v

Four times the sun had risen and set ; and now
on the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of
the farmhouse.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful
procession,
Came from the neighbouring hamlets and farms
the Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods
to the sea-shore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on
their dwellings,
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road
and the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged
on the oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped some
fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried ;
there on the sea-beach
Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the
peasants.
All day long between the shore and the ships did
the boats ply ;
All day long the wains came labouring down from
the village.
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to
his setting,
Echoing far o'er the fields came the roll of drums
from the churchyard.
Thither the women and children thronged. On a
sudden the church-doors
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching
in gloomy procession
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient Acadian
farmers.
Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their
homes and their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are
weary and wayworn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants
descended
Down from the church to the shore, amid their
wives and their daughters.
Foremost the young men came ; and, raising
together their voices,
Sang they with tremulous lips a chant of the
Catholic Missions :—
“ Sacred heart of the Saviour ! O inexhaustible
fountain !

Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and patience ! ”

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood by the wayside

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine above them

Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,

Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction,—

Calmly and sadly waited, until the procession approached her,

And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.

Tears then filled her eyes, and eagerly running to meet him,

Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered,—

“ Gabriel ! be of good cheer ! for if we love one another,

Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen ! ”

Smiling she spake these words ; then suddenly paused, for her father

Saw she slowly advancing. Alas ! how changed was his aspect !

Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye, and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the weary heart in his bosom.

But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck
and embraced him,
Speaking words of endearment where words of
comfort availed not.
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that
mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and
stir of embarking.
Busily plied the freighted boats ; and in the confusion
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers,
too late, saw their children
Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest
entreaties.
So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood
with her father.
Half the task was not done when the sun went
down, and the twilight
Deepened and darkened around ; and in haste the
refluent ocean
Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the
sand-beach
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the
slippery seaweed.
Farther back in the midst of the household goods
and the wagons,
Like to a gipsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels
near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian
farmers.

Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellow-
ing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and
leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of
the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned
from their pastures ;
Sweet was the moist still air with the odour of
milk from their udders ;
Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known
bars of the farmyard,—
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the
hand of the milkmaid.
Silence reigned in the streets : from the church
no Angelus sounded,
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no
lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires
had been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from
wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces
were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the
crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth
in his parish,
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing
and cheering,

Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate
seashore.

Thus he approached the place where Evangeline
sat with her father,

And in the flickering light beheld the face of the
old man,

Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either
thought or emotion,

E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands
have been taken.

Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses
to cheer him,

Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he
looked not, he spake not,

But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering
fire-light.

"*Benedicite!*" murmured the priest, in tones of
compassion.

More he fain would have said, but his heart was
full, and his accents

Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a
child on a threshold,

Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful
presence of sorrow.

Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head
of the maiden,

Raising his eyes, full of tears, to the silent stars
that above them

Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs
and sorrows of mortals,

Then sat he down at her side, and they wept
together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in
autumn the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er
the horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon
mountain and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge
shadows together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs
of the village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships
that lay in the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of
flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like
the quivering hands of a martyr.
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning
thatch, and, uplifting,
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from
a hundred house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame
intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the
shore and on shipboard.
Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in
their anguish,
“We shall behold no more our homes in the village
of Grand-Pré!”
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the
farmyards,

Thinking the day had dawned ; and anon the
lowing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of
dogs interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the
sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the
Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the
speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to
the river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the
herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly
rushed o'er the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the
priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and
widened before them ;
And as they turned at length to speak to their
silent companion,
Lo ! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched
abroad on the seashore
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had
departed.
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and
the maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her
terror,

Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head
on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious
slumber ;
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a
multitude near her.
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully
gazing upon her,
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest
compassion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the
landscape,
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the
faces around her,
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering
senses.
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the
people,—
“Let us bury him here by the sea. When a
happier season
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown
land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the
churchyard.”
Such were the words of the priest. And there in
haste by the seaside,
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral
torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer
of Grand-Pré.
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service
of sorrow,

Lo ! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a
vast congregation,
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar
with the dirges.
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste
of the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and
hurrying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of
embarking ;
And with the ebb of that tide the ships sailed out
of the harbour,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and
the village in ruins.

VI

Many a weary year had passed since the burning
of Grand-Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels
departed,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into
exile,
Exile without an end, and without an example in
story.
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians
landed ;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the
wind from the north-east
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the
Banks of Newfoundland.
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from
city to city,

From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern
savannas,—

From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where
the Father of Waters

Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down
to the ocean,

Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of
the mammoth.

Friends they sought and homes; and many,
despairing, heartbroken,

Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a
friend nor a fireside.

Written their history stands on tablets of stone in
the churchyards.

Long among them was seen a maiden who waited
and wandered,

Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering
all things.

Fair was she and young; but, alas! before her
extended,

Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with
its pathway

Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed
and suffered before her,

Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead
and abandoned,

As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert
is marked by

Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach
in the sunshine.

Something there was in her life incomplete,
imperfect, unfinished;

As if a morning of June, with all its music and
sunshine

Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly
descended

Into the east again, from whence it late had
arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by
the fever within her,

Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst
of the spirit,

She would commence again her endless search and
endeavour ;

Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on
the crosses and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that
perhaps in its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber
beside him.

Sometimes a rumour, a hearsay, an inarticulate
whisper,

Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her
forward.

Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her
beloved and known him,

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or
forgotten.

"Gabriel Lajeunesse !" said they ; "O, yes ! we
have seen him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have
gone to the prairies ;

Coueurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters
and trappers."

“Gabriel Lajeunesse!” said others; “O, yes! we have seen him.

He is a *Voyageur* in the lowlands of Louisiana.”

Then they would say,—“Dear child! why dream and wait for him longer?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal?

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary’s son, who has loved thee

Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy!

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St Catherine’s tresses.”

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, —“I cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not elsewhere.

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,

Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness.”

And thereupon the priest, her friend and father-confessor,

Said, with a smile,—“O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted;

If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning

Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again
to the fountain.

Patience ; accomplish thy labour ; accomplish thy
work of affection !

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient
endurance is godlike.

Therefore accomplish thy labour of love, till the
heart is made godlike,

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered
more worthy of heaven ! ”

Cheered by the good man’s words, Evangeline
laboured and waited.

Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of
the ocean,

But with its sound there was mingled a voice
that whispered, “ Despair not ! ”

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and
cheerless discomfort,

Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns
of existence.

.

VII

In that delightful land which is washed by the
Delaware’s waters,

Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the
apostle,

Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the
city he founded.

There all the air is balm, and the peach is the
emblem of beauty,

And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees
of the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose
haunts they molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline
landed, on exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and
a country.
There old René Leblanc had died ; and when he
departed,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred
descendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly
streets of the city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her
no longer a stranger ;
And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou
of the Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers
and sisters.
So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed
endeavour,
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth,
uncomplaining,
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her
thoughts and her footsteps.
As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the
morning
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,
Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and
hamlets,

So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the
world far below her,
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love ;
and the pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and
fair in the distance.
Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was
his image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last
she beheld him,
Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence
and absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for
it was not.
Over him years had no power ; he was not changed,
but transfigured ;
He had become to her heart as one who is dead,
and not absent ;
Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to
others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had
taught her.
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous
spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with
aroma.
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to
follow
Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her
Saviour.
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy ;
frequenting

Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of
the city,
Where distress and want concealed themselves from
the sunlight,
Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished
neglected.
Night after night, when the world was asleep, as
the watchman repeated
Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well
in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of
her taper.
Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow
through the suburbs
Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits
for the market,
Met he that meek, pale face returning home from
its watchings.

Then it came to pass that that a pestilence fell
on the city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks
of wild pigeons,
Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in
their craws but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of
September,
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a
lake in the meadow,
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural
margin,

Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of
existence.

Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm,
the oppressor ;

But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his
anger ;—

Only, alas ! the poor, who had neither friends nor
attendants,

Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the
homeless.

Then in the suburb it stood, in the midst of
meadows and woodlands ;—

Now the city surrounds it ; but still, with its gate-
way and wicket

Meek, in the midst of splendour, its humble walls
seem to echo

Softly the words of the Lord :—“ The poor ye
always have with you.”

Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of
Mercy. The dying

Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to
behold there

Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with
splendour,

Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints
and apostles,

Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a
distance.

Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city
celestial,

Into whose shining gates ere long their spirits
would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets,
deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of
the almshouse.
Sweet on the summer air was the odour of flowers
in the garden ;
And she paused on her way to gather the fairest
among them,
That the dying once more might rejoice in their
fragrance and beauty.
Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors,
cooled by the east wind,
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the
belfry of Christ Church,
While, intermingled with these, across the meadows
were wafted
Sounds of Psalms, that were sung by the Swedes
in the church at Wicaco.
Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour
on her spirit ;
Something within her said,—“ At length thy trials
are ended ; ”
And, with light in her looks, she entered the
chambers of sickness.
Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful
attendants,
Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow,
and in silence
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and conceal-
ing their faces,
Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow
by the roadside.

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she
 passed, for her presence
Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the
 walls of a prison.
And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the
 consoler,
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it
 forever.
Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night-
 time ;
Vacant their places were, or filled already by
 strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of
 wonder,
Still she stood, with her colourless lips apart, while
 a shudder
Ran through her frame, and forgotten, the flowerets
 drooped from her fingers,
And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom
 of the morning.
Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such
 terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their
 pillows.
On the pallet before her was stretched the form of
 an old man.
Long, and thin, and grey were the locks that
 shaded his temples ;
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a
 moment

Seemed to assume once more the forms of its
earlier manhood ;

So are wont to be changed the faces of those who
are dying.

Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of
the fever,

As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had be-
sprinkled its portals,

That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and
pass over.

Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit
exhausted

Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths
in the darkness,

Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and
sinking.

Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied
reverberations,

Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush
that succeeded

Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and
saint like,

"Gabriel ! O my beloved !" and died away into
silence.

Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home
of his childhood ;

Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among
them,

Village, and mountain, and woodlands ; and, walk-
ing under their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his
vision.

Tears came into his eyes ; and as slowly he lifted
his eyelids,

Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by
his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the
accents unuttered

Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what
his tongue would have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise ; and Evangeline, kneeling
beside him,

Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her
bosom.

Sweet was the light of his eyes ; but it suddenly
sank into darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at
a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and
the sorrow,

All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied
longing,

All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of
patience !

And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to
her bosom,

Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured,
“ Father, I thank thee ! ”

HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

By the shores of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis.
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them ;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea Water.

There the wrinkled, old Nokomis
Nursed the little Hiawatha,
Rocked him in his linden cradle,
Bedded soft in moss and rushes,
Safely bound with reindeer sinews ;
Stilled his fretful wail by saying,
" Hush ! the Naked Bear will get thee !"
Lulled him into slumber, singing,
" Ewa-yea ! my little owlet !
Who is this, that lights the wigwam ?
With his great eyes lights the wigwam ?
Ewa-yea ! my little owlet !"
Many things Nokomis taught him
Of the stars that shine in heaven ;
Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet,
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses ;
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits ;
Warriors with their plumes and war-clubs,
Flaring far away to northward

In the frosty nights of Winter ;
Showed the broad, white road in heaven,
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows,
Running straight across the heavens,
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows.

At the door on Summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha ;
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the water,
Sounds of music, words of wonder ;
“ Minne-wawa ! ” said the pine-trees,
“ Mudway-aushka ! ” said the water.

Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him :
“ Wah-wah taysee, little firefly,
Little flitting, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little cradle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids ! ”

Saw the moon rise from the water
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered, “ What is that, Nokomis ? ”
And the good Nokomis answered :
“ Once a warrior, very angry,
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight ;

Right against the moon he threw her ;
'Tis her body that you see there."

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
In the eastern sky, the rainbow,
Whispered, " What is that, Nokomis ! "
And the good Nokomis answered :
" 'Tis the heaven of flowers you see there ;
All the wild-flowers of the forest,
All the lilies of the prairie,
When on earth they fade and perish,
Blossom in that heaven above us."

When he heard the owls at midnight,
Hooting, laughing in the forest,
" What is that ? " he cried in terror ;
" What is that ? " he said, " Nokomis ? "
And the good Nokomis answered :
" That is but the owl and owlet,
Talking, in their native language,
Talking, scolding at each other."

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them " Hiawatha's Chickens."

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,

Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them Hiawatha's brothers."

Then Iagoo, the great boaster,
He the marvellous story-teller,
He the traveller and the talker,
He the friend of old Nokomis,
Made a bow for Hiawatha :
From a branch of ash he made it,
From an oak-bough made the arrows,
Tipped with flint, and winged with feathers,
And the cord he made of deer-skin.

Then he said to Hiawatha :
"Go, my son, into the forest,
Where the red deer herd together,
Kill for us a famous roebuck,
Kill for us a deer with antlers !"

Forth into the forest straightway
All alone walked Hiawatha
Proudly, with his bow and arrows ;
And the birds sang round him, o'er him
"Do not shoot us, Hiawatha !"
Sang the robin, the Opechee,
Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,
"Do not shoot us, Hiawatha !"

Up the oak-tree, close beside him,
Sprang the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
In and out among the branches,
Coughed and chattered from the oak-tree,
Laughed, and said between his laughing,
"Do not shoot me, Hiawatha !"

And the rabbit from his pathway
Leaped aside, and at a distance

Sat erect upon his haunches,
Half in fear and half in frolic,
Saying to the little hunter,
“Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!”

But he heeded not, nor heard them,
For his thoughts were with the red deer;
On their tracks his eyes were fastened,
Leading downward to the river,
To the ford across the river,
And as one in slumber walked he.

Hidden in the alder bushes,
There he waited till the deer came,
Till he saw two antlers lifted,
Saw two eyes look from the thicket,
Saw two nostrils point to windward,
And a deer came down the pathway,
Flecked with leafy light and shadow.
And his heart within him fluttered,
Trembled like the leaves above him,
Like the birch-leaf palpitated,
As the deer came down the pathway.

Then upon one knee uprising,
Hiawatha aimed an arrow;
Scarce a twig moved with his motion,
Scarce a leaf was stirred or rustled,
But the wary roebuck started.
Stamped with all his hoofs together,
Listened with one foot uplifted,
Leaped as if to meet the arrow;
Ah! the singing, fatal arrow,
Like a wasp it buzzed and stung him!

Dead he lay there in the forest,

By the ford across the river ;
Beat his timid heart no longer,
But the heart of Hiawatha
Throbbled and shouted and exulted,
As he bore the red deer homeward ;
And Iagoo and Nokomis
Hailed his coming with applauses.

From the red deer's hide Nokomis
Made a cloak for Hiawatha,
From the red deer's flesh Nokomis
Made a banquet in his honour.
All the village came and feasted,
All the guests praised Hiawatha,
Called him Strong-heart, Soangetaha !
Called him Loon-Heart, Mahn-go-taysee !

TWILIGHT

THE twilight is sad and cloudy,
The wind blows wild and free,
And like the wings of sea-birds
Flash the white caps of the sea.

But in the fisherman's cottage
There shines a ruddier light,
And a little face at the window
Peers out into the night.

Close, close it is pressed to the window,
As if those childish eyes
Were looking into the darkness,
To see some form arise.

And a woman's waving shadow
Is passing to and fro,
Now rising to the ceiling,
Now bowing and bending low.

What tale do the roaring ocean,
And the night-wind, bleak and wild,
As they beat at the crazy casement,
Tell to that little child ?

And why do the roaring ocean,
And the night-wind, wild and bleak,
As they beat at the heart of the mother,
Drive the colour from her cheek ?

SANTA FILOMENA

(FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE)

WHENE'ER a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

Honour to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
 And by their overflow
 Raise us from what is low !

Thus thought I, as by night I read
Of the great army of the dead,
 The trenches cold and damp,
 The starved and frozen camp,—

The wounded from the battle-plain
In dreary hospitals of pain,
 The cheerless corridors,
 The cold and stony floors.

Lo ! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
 Pass though the glimmering gloom,
 And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
 Her shadow, as it falls
 Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be
Opened and then closed suddenly,
 The vision came and went,
 The light shone and was spent.

On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
That light its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

UNDER a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands ;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands ;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan ;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow ;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,

Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door ;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys ;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise !
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies ;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes ;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close ;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught !

Thus at the flaming forge of life
 Our fortunes must be wrought ;
 Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
 Each burning deed and thought !

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear
 Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
 On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five ;
 Hardly a man is now alive
 Who remembers that famous day and year.
 He said to his friend, " If the British march
 By land or sea from the town to-night,
 Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
 Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
 One, if by land, and two, if by sea ;
 And I on the opposite shore will be,
 Ready to ride and spread the alarm
 Through every Middlesex village and farm,
 For the country-folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, " Good night ! " and with muffled oar
 Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
 Just as the moon rose over the bay,
 Where swinging wide on her moorings lay
 The Somerset, British man-of-war ;
 A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
 Across the moon like a prison bar,
 And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
 By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed to the tower of the Old North
Church,

Up the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade—
Up the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down,
A moment, on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still,
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent

On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth ;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo ! as he looks on the belfry's height,
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light !
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns !

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet ;
That was all ! And yet, through the gloom and
the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night ;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides ;
And under the alders, that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gazed at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.

So through the night rode Paul Revere ;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm

To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore !
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

THE SLAVE'S DREAM

BESIDE the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand ;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed ;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode ;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain-road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand ;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand !—

A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank ;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew ;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream ;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty ;
And the blast of the Desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day ;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away !

A DAY OF SUNSHINE

O GIFT of God ! O perfect day :
Whereon shall no man work, but play ;
Whereon it is enough for me,
Not to be doing, but to be !

Through every fibre of my brain,
Through every nerve, through every vein,
I feel the electric thrill, the touch
Of life, that seems almost too much.

I hear the wind among the trees
Playing celestial symphonies ;
I see the branches downward bent,
Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high
The splendid scenery of the sky,
Where through the sapphire sea the sun
Sails like a golden galleon,

Towards yonder cloud-land in the West,
Towards yonder Islands of the Blest,
Whose steep sierra far uplifts
Its craggy summits white with drifts.

Blow, winds ! and waft through all the rooms
The snowflakes of the cherry-blooms.
Blow, winds ! and bend within my reach
The fiery blossoms of the peach !

O Life and Love ! O happy throng
Of thoughts, whose only speech is song !
O heart of man ! canst thou not be
Blithe as the air is, and as free ?

THE BUILDERS

ALL are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of time ;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low ;
Each thing in its place is best ;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled ;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these ;
 Leave no yawning gaps between ;
Think not, because no man sees,
 Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of art,
 Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part ;
 For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
 Both the unseen and the seen !
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
 Beautiful, entire and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
 Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
 Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
 With a firm and ample base ;
And ascending and secure
 Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
 To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
 And one boundless reach of sky.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight

When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me

The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,

Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence :

Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,

A sudden raid from the hall !
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall !

They climb up into my turret

O'er the arms and back of my chair ;
If I try to escape, they surround me ;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you for ever,
Yes, for ever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

A PSALM OF LIFE

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN
SAID TO THE PSALMIST

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real ! Life is earnest !
And the grave is not its goal ;
“ Dust thou art, to dust returnest,”
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way ;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Finds us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle !
Be a hero in the strife !

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant !
Let the dead Past bury its dead !
Act,—act in the living Present !
Heart within, and God o'erhead !

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time ;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW was born in 1807 in the town of Portland, Maine, in the United States of America.

Portland is by the sea, and, as a boy, the poet fell under the romantic influences which gather about ships and sailors.

By the age of twenty-two, when he was appointed professor of literature at Bowdoin, he had written many poems by which he was becoming known. His father, who was a lawyer, had intended him for a place in his office, and his prospects, considering the slender endowment of his professorship, were not promising. Yet he worked so hard and wisely that he was enabled to marry two years afterwards. Four years later, however, when travelling in Europe before taking up the Professorship of Modern Languages at Harvard University, he lost his wife. His familiarity with French, German, and Italian, is exhibited in his poetry, which was very largely influenced by Goethe and Dante. His lectures at Harvard had, therefore, the advantage of a highly educated literary taste as well as considerable linguistic knowledge. "Hyperion" indicates the influence of Frances Appleton, the lady who became his second wife, the original of

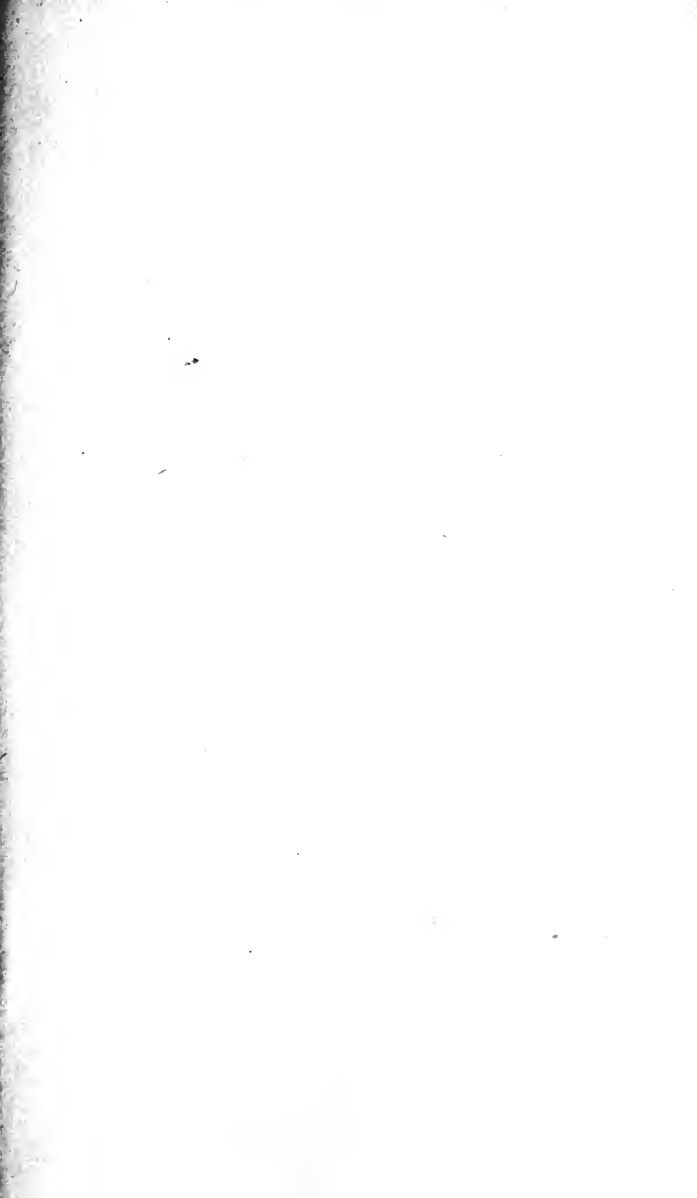
"Mary Ashburton." In 1839 he published "Voices of the Night," containing "The Song of Life" and "The Reaper and The Flowers," among other poems in the vein which specially distinguishes him, and these at once became extraordinarily popular. His poems on Slavery, his drama "A Spanish Student" and "The Belfry of Bruges" now followed. But it was not till the year 1847 that he made his most striking success with "Evangeline," evidently suggested both in form and character by Goethe's "Hermann and Dorothea." This beautiful and pathetic poem took by storm all hearts in England as well as in America, and indeed achieved a European fame. Then came "Kavanagh" and "The Golden Legend," the latter somewhat an echo of "Faust," and a fresh collection of lyrics. He then resigned the Chair of Modern Languages at Harvard, which he had held for eighteen years, to a brother poet, James Russell Lowell, in order to be able to give his whole time to literature. As a result of this he published in 1855, after an exhaustive study of Red Indian lore, "Hiawatha," which, although it has not gone home to the heart as "Evangeline" has done, achieved a greater temporary success as far as its sales were concerned.

In 1858 he brought out "The Courtship of Miles Standish," a most interesting study of early Puritan life in New England. Then, during a period of literary quiescence, he suffered the great grief of his life. In spite of every effort on his part to save her, his wife was accidentally burnt to death in his presence, and the shock to his

system was so great that, from being remarkably youthful looking for his years, he became suddenly aged and white headed.

He turned for comfort to his children, and, a couple of years after his great loss, brought out his "Tales of a Wayside Inn," which contain some fine descriptive writing, and at least two striking narrative poems, "King Robert of Sicily" and "The Falcon of Sir Federigo." A little later appeared his translation of Dante's "Divina Commedia." He visited England, where he received a warm welcome from Queen Victoria, Tennyson, and a host of British admirers. In 1880 appeared his last book "Ultima Thule," and in 1882 he died at the ripe age of seventy-five.

Owing to its simplicity, purity, and humanity, its direct appeal to the heart and singularly lucid expression, Longfellow's poetry has found a popular response which has been denied to poets with robuster powers of thought, deeper imagination, and a more finished technique. As has been well said by a distinguished British poetess, "he preached patience, strength, and endurance in the gentlest of voices, he was not of those for whom the Kingdom of Heaven is taken by violence. He was in a sense spiritual father to hundreds of thousands . . . his reputation stands where it was; and there is no sign that it is built upon the shifting quicksands of time."





YA 08872

